

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAB-01 EUR-12 IO-10 /072 W

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FM USDEL RIYADH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIANA 03

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA NIACT IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS RIYADH 08

DEPARTMENT PASS NSCE WHITE HOUSE FOR NESSEN AND SCOWCROFT

VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE FOR MORROW

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (ROCKEFELLER, NELSON A.)

SUBJECT: VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER'S STATEMENT AND PRESS

CONFERENCE ON DEPARTURE FROM RIYADH, MARCH 27, 1975

FOLLOWING ARE VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLER'S REMARKS ON DEPARTURE
FROM RIYADH, MARCH 27, 1975, AS WELL AS Q&A THAT FOLLOWED:

THE VICE PRESIDENT: (BEGIN QUOTE) LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I
WOULD LIKE TO SAY I HAVE DEEPLY HONORED TO TRANSMIT ON
BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TWO LETTERS TO
THE KING AND TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS OF DEEP CONDOLANCE FOR THE
TRAGEDY AND THE UNTIMELY DEATH OF KING FAISAL TO THE GOVERN-
MENT AND THE PEOPLE OF SAUDI ARABIA FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND
THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES. OUR COUNTRY HAS ENJOYED
VERY CLOSE AND WARM RELATIONSHIPS OVER MANY YEARS WITH SAUDI
ARABIA AND THIS TRAGEDY THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE IS FELT NOT ONLY
IN THE ARAB WORLD, BUT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. I THINK THE
OCCASION OF THIS VISIT AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR VERY USEFUL
CONVERSATIONS, AND ALSO THE OPPORTUNITY OF SEEING WHILE I
WAS HERE PRESIDENT SADAT OF EGYPT HAS BEEN USEFUL, AND IT HAS
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MEANT A GREAT DEAL TO ME TO REPRESENT THE PRESIDENT, WHO IS

DEDICATED TO A JUST, EQUITABLE AND LASTING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. AND LET US HOPE THAT PEACE CAN BE FOUND IN THE INTEREST OF ALL CONCERNED AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE. ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS?

QUESTION: MR. VICE-PRESIDENT, DID YOU DISCUSS THE IDEA OF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE WITH PRESIDENT SADAT?

THE VICE-PRESIDENT: THE GENEVA CONFERENCE, OF COURSE, IS ONE COURSE THAT OUR SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER SAID IN HIS PRESS CONFERENCE YESTERDAY THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO DISCUSS WITH THE CO-CHAIRMAN, WHICH IS THE SOVIET UNION, A GENEVA CONFERENCE, BUT HE IS ALSO PREPARED TO FOLLOW ANY HOPEFUL AVENUES OF APPROACH TO A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT FROM THE PARTIES IT INTERESTS. SO I THINK THAT HE IS FLEXIBLE AT THIS POINT IN HIS APPROACH WHILE THE REASSESSMENT IS TAKING PLACE.

QUESTION: DID PRESIDENT SADAT BRING UP, OR SAY, THAT VIETNAM WAS A COMPLICATING FACTOR IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, IN OTHER WORDS, THE IMPACT OF WHAT IS GOING ON THERE ON THE UNITED STATES' POSITION?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: NO, I THINK THAT HE WAS CONCENTRATING ON THE PROBLEMS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AND HIS DEEP CONCERN AND HIS DEDICATION TO A RAPID SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS, AND DIDN'T FEEL THAT COMMENTING ON OTHER PROBLEMS FACING THE UNITED STATES WAS WITHIN HIS PROVINCE.

QUESTION: WHAT I MEAN TO SAY IS THAT...IS THE UNITED STATES NEGOTIATION ABILITY....

THE VICE PRESIDENT: OH, I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BUT I WAS ANSWERING YOUR QUESTION AS TO WHETHER HE COMMENTED ON IT.

QUESTION: MR. VICE PRESIDENT, CAN YOU SAY ANYTHING ABOUT SAUDI POLICY AFTER YOUR TALKS HERE TODAY WITH SAUDI LEADERS, IN PARTICULAR WITH PRINCE FAHD?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: MY IMPRESSION WAS THAT THERE IS A VERY DEEP AND LASTING FRIENDSHIP AND THAT THE POLICIES WHICH HAVE BEEN FOLLOWED, AND THEY HAVE STATES BOTH PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY UNCLASSIFIED

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THEIR INTENTION TO PURSUE THOSE SAME POLICIES.

QUESTION: MR. VICE PRESIDENT, IF I CAN MAKE SURE THAT IS CLEAR, IN OTHER WORDS, THERE HAS BEEN SOME SUGGESTION THAT THE CREDIBILITY OF THE UNITED STATES WAS NOT AS GREAT BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT IN VIETNAM THE UNITED STATES IS UNABLE TO KEEP UP ITS COMMITMENT AND THAT DR. KISSINGER WAS NOT ABLE TO

NEGOTIATE WITH FULL FORCE, IN OTHER WORDS, BECAUSE OF THAT.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: WELL, ARE YOU LIMITING YOUR QUESTION TO VIET NAM, OR DO YOU INCLUDE CAMBODIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND TURKEY AND LATIN AMERICA AND THE SOVIET UNION?

QUESTION: WELL, IN OTHER WORDS, THE UNITED STATES POSITION IN NEGOTIATING?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: WELL, I WOULD HAVE TO ASSUME THAT THOSE DEVELOPMENTS CERTAINLY HAVE NOT STRENGTHENED THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES IN NEGOTIATING. LET US FACE IT, AMONG FRIENDS WHEREVER THEY ARE IF THEY FEEL THEY HAVE BEEN LET DOWN, IT DOESN'T STRENGTHEN YOUR POSITION.

QUESTION: DID PRESIDENT SADAT BRING THIS UP AT ALL?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: NO HE DIDN'T. THAT IS WHY I WAS TRYING TO MAKE THAT CLEAR BEFORE. YOU ARE RAISING THE QUESTION AND I AM CONFIRMING YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE SUBJECT.

QUESTION: DID PRINCE FAHD BRING IT UP?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: NO, HE DIDN'T EITHAJ. I WOULD ASSUME THAT BOTH OF THEM FELT THAT THESE WERE PROBLEMS OF THE UNITED STATES... WHICH IS OUR PROBLEM.

QUESTION: MR. ROCKEFELLER.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: SIR.

QUESTION: WITH PRESIDENT SADAT, DID YOU DISCUSS ANY ALTERNATIVE AVENUES TO APPROACH PEACE OTHER THAN GENEVA? IS THERE--AS YOU UNCLASSIFIED

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MENTIONED BEFORE--DR. KISSINGER'S POSITION IS FLEXIBLE--IS THERE SOME SIMIOAR FLEXIBILITY OF THINKING?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: NO, I THINK THAT THE WAY I WOULD CHARACTERIZE THE SENTIMENT IN ALL DISCUSSIONS IS THAT THERE IS AN URGENT DESIRE TO SEE THIS PROBLEM RESOLVED, AND PEACE ON A JUST AND EQUITABLE BASIS ACHIEVED THAT CAN BE A LASTING PEACE.

QUESTION: DID PRESIDENT SAEET INDICATE IN ANY WAY THAT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO VIEW OTHER THAN WHAT DR. KISSINGER WAS ABLE TO DRAW FROM...

THE VICE PRESIDENT: I THINK THAT DR. KISSINER SAID PUBLICLY THAT HE FELT THE EQYPTIANS HAD BEEN VERY FORTHCOMING IN THEIR RESPONSE.

QUESTION: IS THERE ANY DESIRE ON THE PART OF PRESIDENT SADAT TO HAVE DR. KISSINGER RESUME HIS SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY?

THE VICE PRESIDENT: WELL, I DON'T THINK THAT IT WOULD BE APPROPRIATE FOR ME TO DISCUSS IN ANY DETAIL COMMENTS MADE BY A HEAD OF STATE, AND I WOULD ASSUME THAT THOSE WOULD BE QUESTIONS WHICH YOU WOULD ASK THE HEADS OF STATE.

THANK YOU MR. VICE PRESIDENT.

THE VICE PRESIDENT: IT HAS BEEN A GREAT PLEASURE AND AN HONOR.

THANK YOU.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975RIYADH00008
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750107-0756
From: RIYADH
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975039/aaaaaibg.tel
Line Count: 183
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: woolflhd
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 JUN 2003 by RuthemTJ>; APPROVED <06 JAN 2004 by woolflhd>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VICE PRESIDENT ROCKEFELLERS STATEMENT AND PRESS CONFERENCE ON DEPARTURE FROM RIYADH, MARCH 27, 1975
TAGS: OVIP, (ROCKEFELLER, NELSON A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006